

PR Manager – District 71 2015-2016

Taking up the role of PR Manager was a little bit like doing my Ice Breaker. It was scary, it was stressful and it was slightly intimidating. The only thing I remember about my Ice Breaker is walking up to the lectern and walking back down to my seat. The bit in the middle is a complete BLANK. I have come a long way since then and fortunately I do remember what has been happening on the PR front since the 1st July.

TRADE SHOWS

Part of the role of the PR Manager is to raise the awareness of Toastmasters in the public domain. This year we have continued to take stands at trade shows as a means of informing the public about Toastmasters. For example, we had a stand for three days at the **National Ploughing Championships** in the heart of Ireland which had a footfall of over 280,000. A team of volunteers manned the stand and talked up Toastmasters and took contact details of anyone who expressed an interest in learning more about Toastmasters. Also, thanks to Inverness Toastmasters there was a stand at the Highland Show in Scotland, and another stand at a show in the south of Ireland in Division A. In Dublin we had a stand at a conference for teachers on World Teacher's Day. At this conference we were able to promote the benefits of Toastmasters to teachers AND also the benefits of running a Youth Leadership Program in schools.

OPEN NIGHT

Another part of the role of PR Manager is to give the club Vice Presidents for Public Relations the tools to help them promote their clubs in their local communities or their companies with a view to attracting new members. I felt a good way to do this would be to encourage all clubs in the District to hold an open night. To assist them in this every club in the District received an "open night" package. This package contained my 10 tips on how to run a successful open night, suggestions gleaned from Division Directors and Area Directors at District Officer Training on promoting an open night, running an open night and following up afterwards. I threw in an incentive which centred around signing up at least one new member on foot of an open night, and the uptake has been encouraging. I would like to compliment our clubs on how creative they are with their promotional material.

SPEECHCRAFT

I am also promoting Speechcraft throughout the District as an almost foolproof way of attracting new members into clubs. I have delivered a Speechcraft presentation in Division F and will be delivering one at the Black Cat Conference. Speechcraft is not only an excellent membership-building tool, it also develops leadership skills in members who deliver the program.

NEWSLETTER & PRESS COVERAGE

Another important part of the role of the PR Manager is to produce newsletters throughout the year. The first newsletter has just issued and I am grateful to those toastmaster who supplied me with articles. Our PR professional, Chantal Cooke, has succeeded in publishing articles relating to Toastmasters in over 70 publications. In total, the estimated reach to date is 9.8 million views, with a combined editorial value of £344,000.

Patricia O'Reilly
District 71 Public Relations Manager

